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ABSTRACT

The Teacher's Handbook is part of the publication series of the Southeastern Education Laboratory/Project Language (SEL/PL), an 8-year language-centered program designed to alleviate the language deficiencies of disadvantaged children between the ages of four and eleven. For teachers utilizing SEL/PL, the Handbook provides a research summary and description of project materials spanning the project from nursery school through sixth grade. (Only Level III, Kindergarten, of this comprehensive effort is completed and ready for classroom use.) Included in the Kindergarten Handbook are a review of research on listening, speaking, reading, and writing, a discussion of product objectives, and a bibliography. Kindergarten, Volume One, (Lessons 1-16) is available as PS 004 669. Volume Two (Lessons 17-32) is available as PS 005 021 and Pupil's Book, (Lessons 1-32) is available as PS 004 670. (WY)

SEL/PROJECT LANGUAGE

Teacher's Handbook

Level II — Kindergarten

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Kenneth W. Tidwell, Executive Director
Southeastern Education Laboratory

SEL/PROJECT LANGUAGE

Teacher's Handbook

Introduction

Extensive research studies indicate that the language systems utilized by disadvantaged children are a major deterrent to their school achievement. The performance of such pupils in all subject areas throughout their school career is hampered by their inability to effectively communicate in or relate to an established institutional rhetoric. The great number of children in the Southeast Region who can be termed disadvantaged need a specialized program directed toward their specific problem areas. To be most effective, this educational approach should commence as the children enter the schools. An early intervention in the language habits of the disadvantaged will facilitate the adjustment of the children to school and to the accomplishment of the learning tasks presented.

SEL/Project Language is planned to be an eight-year language-centered program designed to alleviate the language deficiencies of disadvantaged children between the ages of four and eleven. The communication problems and the lack of varied experiences which usually occur in children reared in educationally and socially deprived environments are known to cause a lack of school readiness and to reduce academic accomplishment. The current SEL/Project Language plans are the result of comprehensive efforts during the past three years to (1) identify pupil needs and characteristics, (2) develop pilot materials and programs to meet those needs and (3) conduct very extensive research to serve as a basis for all

program development activities. For the teachers utilizing SEL/PL, this Handbook provides a research summary and a detailed description of the materials.

Review of Research

A survey of the research indicates that the major studies in communication arts have been categorized into four basic areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing-composition.

LISTENING. Wilt (1950) found from observations made in eighteen classrooms that children were required to spend substantially more of the school day in listening activities than the teachers whom she surveyed had estimated. Over half of a five-hour day (almost 58 percent) was spend engaged in listening—mostly to the teacher. The median percentages of time were 84, 56, 61, 52 and 62 percent respectively for grades one through six. In spite of this, 61 percent of the teachers ranked reading as the language arts skill that was most important to teach and only 16 percent placed listening first.

Although a considerable amount of listening is required of everyone, Taylor (1964) stated:

> Research has shown that the average person will retain only 50% of what he hears, no matter how hard he concentrates, and that two months later he can be expected to recall only half of that amount. (p. 4)

In discussing the nature of listening, Taylor (1964) identified three distinguishable stages involved in the listening process, and he defined each as follows:

1. Hearing - - the process by which speech sounds are received and modified by the ear.

2. Listening - - the process of identifying the component sounds and sound sequences whereby known words are recognizable.

3. Auding - - the process by which the continuous flow of words is translated into meaning.

Horroworth (1966) added to Taylor's stages a fourth one which she called "cognizing," and she defined this as referring to all the various aspects of knowing. She listed ten "conceptualization experiences" characteristic of the cognizing stage, among which are the following: making comparisons, categorizing, drawing inferences and forming sensory images.

Strickland (1969) stated that as a person listens, four things occur simultaneously:

1. He recognizes the sound patterns.

2. He puts meaning into the sound patterns.

3. He reacts to the sound patterns with his own background of experience.

4. He puts the materials into perspective (p. 129)

She also stated that the listener frequently remembers those parts of what he hears that mean enough to him to be remembered.

Wilt (1950) has identified several levels of listening through which the maturing listener progresses:

> Little conscious listening and then only when interest is closely related to the self: easily distracted by people and things in the environment.
>
> Half listening: holding fast to own ideas and waiting to insert them at the first opportunity.
>
> Listening passively: apparent absorption but little or no reaction.
>
> Off again - on again listening: mentally entering into what is said if and when it is closely related to own interests.

Listening: responding with items from own experience as result of associations brought to mind.

Listening: some reactions through questions or comments.

Listening: some genuine emotional and mental participation.

Listening: a meeting of minds. (pp. 42-3)

The National Council of Teachers of English has a Commission of the English Curriculum which in 1954 classified listening into various types:

> Passive or marginal listening involves a deliberate "tuning-out" of what is heard with just enough consciousness of the language or sound to bring the child back to attention when a favorite radio personality comes on.
>
> Appreciative listening is involved when the hearer settles down to enjoy a dramatization, a story or a poem.
>
> Attentive listening is needed in situations in which accuracy of comprehension is involved, as in directions, announcements and introductions.
>
> Analytical listening takes place, for example, when the listener weighs what is heard against personal experience and is alert to attempts of the speaker to sway his opinion by the devices of propaganda. (pp. 80-81)

Thus, one would say that listening is a process which involves more than merely hearing sounds and noises. For purposes of this report, it is defined as "the process of hearing, identifying, understanding and interpreting spoken language." (Lewis, 1958)

A substantial number of studies have been devoted to determining the interrelationships of listening to other language arts factors such as speaking, reading, critical thinking and intelligence.

Since a child learns to speak his language by listening to it, one would assume that a high relationship exists between speaking and listening effectiveness. Beery (1954) stated: "In a real sense, listening and speaking are reverse sides of the same coin. One speaks to a listener; one listens to a speaker." (p. 164)

Some speech authorities stress the importance of teaching children to listen more attentively to sounds as an essential step in improving articulation. Devine (1967) quoted Lawson (1964) as suggesting that the development of the listener function in an individual "probably plays an important role in the ultimate development of his skill as a speaker in being able to order verbal behavior."

Research raises some questions regarding a valid measurable relationship between listening and speaking. Black (1955) directed a study involving a large number of adults and found correlations between listening and speaking scores ranging from .02 to .87 with a median of .21.

Everetts (1962) reported a positive relationship between children's oral language structure and their listening ability as measured by the Marten Test. Brilhart (1965) found no evidence of positive correlation between certain kinds of listening and speaking activities. Thus, the nature and extent of the relationship between listening and speaking could be said to be assumed rather than to be supported by research.

A major portion of the studies relating listening to other language skills have been focused on its effects on reading. Since both are receptive skills, concerned with the intake half of the communication process, they are somewhat analogous. It should be noted here that a generally accepted factor in reading readiness is auditory discrimination. This is the skill of hearing the sounds of language and being able to determine those sounds which are alike and those which are different. It is not equivalent to

listening, but rather a prerequisite. Listening involves comprehension, interpretation and evaluation. Thus, studies in auditory discrimination will not be presented here and are not to be confused with studies of the relationship between listening and reading.

A comprehensive and useful article is one by Duke (1965) who summarized the significant research from some two hundred studies dealing with the relationship between listening and reading. He stated that twenty-three major studies have reported coefficients of correlation between the two skills, most of which show a strong positive relationship.

Directing attention to the question, "How is listening related to reading?" Duker (1965) cited two significant factor-analysis studies: one by Holmes and Singer (1961) and one by Spearritt (1961), which leave no doubt of the existence of listening competence as a separate and distinct ability which plays a vital role in determining reading success or failure. Devine (1967) reported on reviews by Hollingsworth (1964) and Townsend (1964) which stress the relationship between reading and listening test scores. Later, Hollingsworth (1965) emphasized the need for planning teaching programs which focus on such a relationship.

A study directed by Biggins (1961) sought to compare listening comprehension with reading comprehension, mental age, sex, cultural background and teachers' evaluations of children's abilities to listen. Two hundred and fifty second- and third-grade children were the subjects. The conclusions made were that listening ability has a strong relationship with reading ability and intelligence.

Winter (1966) tested 563 children in grades four, five and six to determine interrelationships of listening, achievement and intelligence. Findings indicated highly significant and moderate relationships between listening and intelligence, highly significant and moderate relationships between listening and each of the subject areas which were tested and highly significant and moderate relationships between listening comprehension and total school achievement.

Kellog (1967) investigated the difference in the effects on reading and listening of a first-grade structured listening program as compared to an unstructured listening program, both of which utilized literature. Pre- and posttest scores in listening and reading were analyzed. The significant differences in achievement in all treatment groups favored the structured listening program. Duker (1965) cited several studies which suggest that listening ability may be a better predictor of reading potential than are intelligence tests.

Another large group of studies have compared the effects of written and oral instruction. Witty and Sizemore (1959) presented an extensive summary of the findings of research in this area. The following statement describes their conclusions:

> Differences in the efficiency of learning, it was discovered, could be traced, not to the particular type of presentation such as the visual or the auditory, but instead to factors such as the nature of the task to be mastered, the types of material to be dealt with, the age of the subjects and the influence exerted by interest of past experience. It was found, of course, that effective learning could take place through different sensory avenues—in some cases with equal success through two or more approaches or combinations of approaches. (p. 297)

The research in the interrelationships of listening and other factors in the learning process conclude that effective planning of a language arts program must take into account the importance of the role of listening instruction.

Brown (1967) examined fourteen textbook series (a total of 54 books) published from 1959-1964 for grades three through six and found that all of the texts recognized that speech and listening are the "basic language arts" and the linguistic foundations for skill in reading and writing. Milner (1951) found that first-grade children who had the opportunity to talk and to be listened to by significant adults in their environment showed a higher attainment in all the language skills including listening.

Many of the research studies which tested the effects of a listening program contained specific lesson plans which were found to be effective in listening instruction. Pratt (1956) described a listening program which included lessons in such skills as recall of word meaning, deduction of meaning of unknown words, noting details, following directions, organizing main ideas and subordinate ideas, selecting information pertinent to specific topics, detecting clues that show a speaker's trend of thought, evaluating an expressed point of view or fact and making inferences. On the basis of pre-and posttests, he concluded that listening ability can be improved when instruction is concerned with the skills involved in the listening process. Canfield (1961) sought to determine whether listening skills are developed more effectively through normal usage during the day (indirect instruction) or through special lessons in listening (direct instruction). His program for direct instruction consisted

of activities requiring specific skills. His indirect program simply required that children listen to selections and then discuss their content. A control group received the usual language arts program with no planned listening instruction. All the children were fifth graders. Both experimental groups exceeded the control group in the final testing; however, the group who had received direct instruction exceeded the group who had received indirect instruction. Trivette (1961), Lubersham (1962), Lundsteen (1964) and Laurent (1963) conducted similar studies showing positive results through the use of directed instruction in listening.

Wilt (1950) seemed to sum up the general thinking in regard to listening:

> There are no patterns to be brought or tricks to be taught. First, teachers must be good listeners themselves; they must constantly be evaluating their own skill and improving it. Second, they must help children become aware of the world of sound, of the satisfactions inherent in this symphonic world and of the safety and the life adjustment values which correlate with being selective, adaptable and utilitarian listeners. Third, they will guide children in experiences and activities as well as in other methods of learning. (p. 170)

SPEAKING. Several studies can be cited which support the belief that children have an intuitive awareness of the principles of the language system. Contrary to some beliefs, children do not seem to grasp the systematic order of their language totally by imitating adults. As Cazden (1969) stated:

> One of the most dramatic findings of studies of child language acquisition is that these stages show striking similarities across children but equally striking deviations from the adult grammar (p. 128).

Imitation plays an important role in the child's acquisition of vocabulary, but observation indicates that even in the early years the child creates sentences of his own that are not copies from adults. Menyuk (1964) discovered in her studies of preschool children from average to above average socioeconomic levels that the basic structures used by adults to generate their sentences can be found in the language of children as young as two years, ten months to three years, one month. How this is achieved is not yet entirely clear. Speaking of children's grammatical skill between the ages of two to and five, Chukovsky (1963) stated:

> ... the child having no notion of grammatical rules uses quite correctly all noun cases, verb tenses, the moods, even when he uses unfamiliar words. This perceptive use of words is a most amazing phenomenon of early childhood.

Research concerning the relationship between language and thinking has had the attention of psychologists and linguists. Russell (1955) stated that some psychologists regard language and thought as identical. Petty and Starkey (1966) described two points of view which are held regarding this relationship:

> One point of view says that thinking consists of verbalization, that the thought and the words in which it is expressed are one and the same thing. The other says that thought takes shape independent of language and that language is merely the vehicle, the container of an already accomplished thought (p. 387).

Carroll (1964) has theorized that thinking may develop both from vocalization and directly from the nervous system, independent of motor activity.

Vygotsky (1962) hypothesized that speech is internalized psychologically before it is internalized physically. He identified four stages in the process:

(1) the primitive or natural stage when the child babbles without preverbal thought.

(2) the "naive psychology" stage in which the child's speech may run ahead of his thinking. Grammatical forms and structures are used even before the child understands the logic of these operations. "He masters the syntax of speech before the syntax of thought."

(3) the stage when the child uses egocentric speech. Speech is an accompaniment to action. External signs and operations are used as aids in the solution of internal problems.

(4) the "ingrowth" stage in which "the external operation turns inward and undergoes a profound change in the process. The final stage of inner, soundless speech (pp. 46, 47)"

May (1966) reported in his summary of research dealing with the effects of child-rearing practices and conditions of language development:

> It is reasonably evident that stuttering, retardation and articulatory defects, when not physiologically caused, are related to a mentally unhealthy home environment. Children free of such defects tend to come from homes in which parents have positive feelings toward themselves, accept their children and display affection toward them, maintain consistent but mild discipline, avoid setting impossible standards for children and provide ample opportunities for them to speak without being under tension (p. 25).

According to Smith (1964), studies of large families and of twins indicate that the only child, who has associated mainly with adults, is superior in command of language to members of large families who must share their mothers with brothers and sisters. Higgenbotham (1961) recorded the "show and tell" episodes of 108 private school children whose intelligence scores and socioeconomic ratings were all above average, and she found that children without siblings have longer talks, used longer sentences, spoke more slowly, were more easily heard and had more correct articulation than children with siblings. She also found an inverse relationship

between the number of siblings and the quality of oral language. Thus, it appears that oral language proficiency increases directly with the quantity of communication with adults.

In recent years there has been considerable interest in the child of low socioeconomic status and the effects of this status on his school success. Part of this interest has evolved from school integration and the problems arising from the inability of deprived children to communicate in "school language." Templin (1957) in a study of 480 children between the ages of three and eight, found that the oral vocabularies of advantaged children were definitely superior to those of disadvantaged children. She also noted that the advantaged children tended to use advanced sentence structures more frequently. Loban (1963) found that advantaged pupils generally used more complex grammatical structures and McCarthy (1930) found that advantaged children used longer sentences and more mature sentences forms at earlier ages. Deutsch (1963), in his study of first- and fifth-grade children of low-income-status reported that the children had more expressive language ability than generally emerged in the classroom, but that syntax was quite deficient.

Frost (1964) reported that children of migrant workers are severely limited in the language skills required for school tasks. He administered the Peabody Vocabulary Test to thirty-two children between the ages of six and sixteen. He found that the child of six or seven had essentially the same vocabulary as did the child of fifteen or sixteen. He stated, "Although the average I.Q. of these children was 78 with a range of 54 to 100, their behavior

suggested a high degree of skill in the areas related to their living patterns." Thomas (1962) interviewed fifty black and fifty white kindergarten children who were from a low socioeconomic urban area. The interviews demonstrated that all of the children showed deficiences in amount, maturity and quality of oral expression. Raph (1965) reviewed other current studies on the process of language acquisition under socially disadvantaged circumstances. She made these conclusions from the research:

> Research to date indicates that the process of language acquisition for socially disadvantaged children, in contrast to that of middle class children, is more subject (a) to a lack of vocal stimulation during infancy, (b) to a paucity of experiences in conversation with more verbally mature adults in the first three or four years of life, (c) to severe limitations in the opportunities to develop mature cognitive behavior and (d) to the types of emotional encounters which result in the restricting of the children's conceptual and verbal skills. Distinctive qualities of their language and speech include (a) a deficit in the auditory-vocal modality greater than in the visual-motor areas, (b) a meagerness of quantity and quality of verbal expression, which serves to depress intellectual functioning as they grow older and (c) a slower rate and a lower level of articulatory maturation.

It is generally believed that the teacher's speech should be of the quality that provides a favorable model for the child to imitate. Research does offer evidence for the belief that leadership patterns of the teacher influence oral language growth. Ryans (1961) reported that teachers who were understanding and friendly, yet organized and stimulating, encouraged productive and confident participation in discussions.

During the past decade, there has been increased emphasis on teaching for improvement in oral language skills. The cause for this can be attributed to several factors. One of these factors

is the substantial body of research which has pointed to the relationship between skill in speaking and success in reading and writing. The most impressive study showing this relationship was carried out by Loban (1963) who collected samples of oral language from kindergarten children and followed these same students through grade twelve collecting language samples each year along with reading test scores and samples of writing when the students had acquired those skills. His final analysis revealed that children who exhibited high levels of skill in speaking and oral language development usually were advanced in their ability to read and write. Those who were low in general language ability were also low in reading and writing achievement. He concluded that competence in spoken language appears to be a necessary base for competence in reading and writing. Artley (1953) summarized several studies which show the importance of oral language development before reading instruction begins. More recent research which shows the interrelationship of the language arts skills is summarized by Ruddell (1966). He made the following conclusion:

> The research reviewed here strongly suggests that facility in oral expression, particularly vocabulary knowledge and an understanding of sentence structure, is basic to the development of reading comprehension skill (p. 492).

The work of linguists has given a new emphasis on oral language. They recognize the primacy of the spoken word and emphasize the stress, rhythm and intonation of oral expression as important clues to the meanings of printed words.

Before planning programs and activities for developing oral language skills it is well to determine the components of oral

expression. Strang (1965) identified these components in the following statement:

> In brief, the essentials of effective oral expression are a thought to begin with, expressed in grammatically approved sentence structure, in precise and vivid words, spoken with appropriate stress, pitch and intonation and pleasing quality of voice—plus a command of the subject and desire to communicate it to the audience (p. 39).

Green and Petty (1963) listed five goals which focus on the oral aspects of the language arts program: (1) spontaneity of expression, (2) socialization, (3) enunciation and voice control, (4) correct usage and (5) organization of thought.

Russell's (1954) examination of the meaning vocabularies in grades four through twelve recognized (1) the breadth of the vocabulary as determined by a wide range of interests and a mastery of multiple meanings of words, (2) the depth of the vocabulary which is indicated by an ability to go beyond the superficial recognition of a single synonym and (3) the height of the vocabulary in terms of its growth in size from year to year for the nine years.

It has generally been established that one's vocabulary is an outgrowth in large measure of the richness and the depth of one's experiences. Thus, one would expect the vocabulary to grow as the result of engaging in numerous and varied experiences followed by discussion which would help to label and to categorize the experiences. A number of studies investigating various methods of teaching vocabulary were described by Petty and associates (1968) who generalized the findings in the following statement:

> The studies investigated show that vocabulary can be taught; they do not show that a "direct" method is better than teaching them in context, that an inductive approach is better than a deductive one. That is, it is not clear

> that these or any other dichotomies—other than that of teaching it—have been resolved as a consequence of the designing, executing and reporting of these many studies (p.25).

To give young children practice in hearing standard English, Martin (1968) recommended that the teacher "turn to literature to find language experiences that help children delight in bridging the gap from home-rooted experiences to those that the culture prefers."

READING. Because of the complex nature of reading, many definitions of the skill have evolved. W. S. Gray (1960, p. 9-10) stated that in order for a child to read, he must associate sound and meaning with printed words. He also said that there are four major components in the interpretation of printed matter. They are (1) word preception, (2) comprehension of the ideas represented by the words, (3) reaction to ideas and (4) assimilation or integration of the ideas with previous knowledge or experience. According to Smith and Dechant (1961) "Reading is the perception of graphic symbols. It is the process of relating graphic symbols to the reader's fund of experience (p. 44)." Bond and Tinker (1967) defined reading in yet another way. They said, "Reading involves the recognition of printed or written symbols which serve as stimuli for the recall of meanings built up through the reader's past experiences (p. 22)." Spache (1969) didn't define reading in one single definition but described it in several ways: reading as skill development, reading as a visual act, reading as a perceptual act, reading as a reflection of cultural background and reading as a thinking process.

The teaching of reading has received much attention in the past few years. One of the questions most frequently asked, "Is there a best method for teaching reading?" Today, the classroom teacher is confronted with many varied approaches in teaching reading. These approaches may be classified as (1) basal-reader oriented, (2) phonic, (3) linguistic, (4) programmed, (5) alphabet, (6) individualized and (7) language experience.

(1) The basal-reader approach is probably more widely known and used than any other approach, as studies have shown that 90-98 percent of all classroom teachers utilize a basal reader each day as a part of the reading program.

The basal-reader approach consists of a coordinated series of readers with accompanying workbooks designed for use in grades one through eight. In addition to the readers and workbooks, most series include word cards, readiness workbooks, ditto materials, transparencies, charts and co-basal readers. Because of the concern over the content of basals, many publishers now have materials for multi-ethnic groups as well as materials for the gifted and for the slow or below average student. Most basal series have readiness tests and/or achievement tests to be used in evaluating pupil progress and readiness for the next level of difficulty.

Each difficulty level of materials has an accompanying teacher's manual which has specific suggestions for teaching the lessons. Usually the first section gives an overview of the total reading program for the particular series, including objectives, sequence of skills and total vocabulary. Frequently, following the lesson

plans is a section which lists additional activities, supplementary materials, filmstrips, films, etc.

Although most basal texts recommend directed reading instruction, there is no research prior to 1968 to indicate that this is an effective practice. Goudey (1968) studied two groups of fourth-grade children under directed and non-directed conditions. The results of the Bond, Balow, Hoyt Reading Test indicated that the non-directed children performed better than did the directed group. Although the implication emerging from this study is that directed reading may not be as beneficial as previously believed, more research needs to be conducted in the area. The Harvard-Carnegie Reading Study (1963) conducted by Austin and others found that the use of the basal readers is most effective in its developmental approach to reading. Another issue stated in the study was that the basal reader should supplement rather than replace the teacher's judgment.

Major criticisms of the basal reader are focused upon the content of most series (Byers, 1964; Henry, 1961; Smith, 1962). The criticisms are that the stories should be of better literary quality, should be more challenging, and should bear a closer relation to the realities of children's lives. In most of the basals, the stories are related to middle-class values and the reading tasks of the content area are neglected.

In an attempt to investigate the criticisms of content in basal readers, Blom and others (1968) analyzed the content of stories in first-grade readers and children's responses to these stories. Data were analyzed on 1307 stories in twelve of the most commonly

used series. The content analyses showed no differences across the preprimer, primer and first-grade reader levels. The authors of the stories describe a gestalt for the books which is quite different from what is known about child development and from the realities of community, family and child life. The gestalt given by Blom and others (1968, p. 321) described the activities as neutral and redundant without much content, significance and variation.

The basal reader approach outlines a readiness program but, according to many reading specialists, the basal program has failed to clarify in teachers' minds the true purpose of the program and how it relates to the total reading act. As a result of this misconception, many faulty classroom techniques are employed. A number of classroom teachers feel that readiness involves workbook activities prior to formal reading instruction thus defeating the primary purpose of preparing children for the complex reading act. Heilman (1961, p.17) noted, "Teachers rarely withhold basal reading materials from the least ready for more than a few weeks after the rest of the class has started to use them."

Recently the controversy regarding the use of basal reading materials has been related to disadvantaged children. Even though efforts have been made to design basal readers to meet the needs of such children, critics feel that the children cannot relate to the content of the readers and they advise "effective" teachers of disadvantaged pupils to shift to other approaches and materials (Davis, 1965).

Another common complaint in regard to the basal reader is the controlled vocabulary. Critics say that the materials are too

immature for the six-year-old since the vocabulary in the basals is equivalent to the speaking vocabulary of a two-year-old. The repetition of words is another concern.

Spache (1969) cited three reasons which contradict the claim that a limited vocabulary is essential for the verbatim learning necessary for the foundation of all future reading. First, some studies have shown that average pupils who advanced as far as the primer level spontaneously learned many words other than the basal vocabulary (Clark, 1955). Second, with the exception of a few hundred words which occur frequently in all reading materials, there is no basal vocabulary. Studies of the various basal series have shown little overlap (Groff, 1961). Spache (1969) cited two studies by Arthur Gates (1961, 1962) as pointing up a third reason against extreme vocabulary control. Gates (1961) evaluated some three hundred third-grade students, who were being taught by the basal reader approach, on their knowledge of the third and fourth-grade vocabularies of their basal series. He found that, on the average, pupils knew as many fourth-grade words as they did third-grade words. In the second study, Gates (1962) repeated this type of evaluation with second graders. He found that about 60 percent of the pupils knew 90 percent or more of the basal vocabulary to which they would be introduced in the first four grades. Even the poorest 10 percent of the pupils had learned about half of the total vocabulary before the scheduled time.

If teachers know the basic skills of word recognition and of comprehension as well as the sequence for teaching these skills, they can teach adequately the fundamental skills without the use of a

basal reader. The basal reader does offer a sequential program for the basic skills and could be used effectively as a guide.

(2) The phonics approach to teaching reading should be differentiated from the phonics element of basal reader programs. Phonics programs direct the children to learn the names of the letters and their sounds before learning to read the words, whereas phonics within the basal program is a means of sounding out or unlocking new words as the child discovers them while reading.

The phonics programs currently available may be classified into two categories: (1) partial programs - those designed for use with existing materials such as the basal readers, (2) complete programs - those designed for use as the total reading program.

Numerous research studies have examined the use of phonics in teaching beginning reading. In 1958, Morrone reviewed 198 investigations on phonics and found that no indisputable evidence was disclosed by the research concerning phonics in either reading or spelling.

Morrone (1958, p. 14) stated:

> "Disagreement exists as to the approach and amount of phonic instruction teachers should utilize in reading; however, most of the scientifically accurate experiments show that phonics has considerable value to the learner in the reading process."

In contrast to these findings, McDowell (1953) compared five schools using a synthetic phonics method with five schools using a basal reader approach and found no significant difference. The children were tested on the Iowa Silent Reading Test and the Metropolitan Achievement Battery. On the Iowa Test, the basal group obtained better

scores on all measures except the directed reading and alphabetizing; whereas, no significant differences were found between the two approaches when tested on the Metropolitan Battery. McDowell also compared those children who missed the first five months of phonics instruction with the children who had completed the entire phonics program. No significant differences were found between the groups. McDowell concluded that the phonics programs did not accomplish the results they claimed.

(3) Linguistics is the scientific study of language. At present there are several viewpoints as to the linguistic method of teaching reading. Spache (1969, p. 154) credited this disagreement to the fact that there are several distinct types of linguistic scientists. Although the linguists are concerned with different areas in regards to beginning reading instruction, the methods are all labeled the linguistic approach. Basic procedures which are inherent in the linguistic approach follow. (It is important to note that all procedures are not advocated by all linguists.)

1. The child learns the alphabet first so that he can recognize the letters or symbols representing the sounds of oral language.
2. The words regularly spelled as cat, fat, mat are taught first so that the child can discover the relationship between the sound and the symbol.
3. Words are taught as wholes and are not sounded out. If the child fails to recognize the word, he is taught to spell it rather than to sound it out.
4. Oral reading is stressed over silent reading.
5. Picture clues and context clues are discouraged. Most of the linguistic readers contain no illustrations.

6. Meaning is not stressed because the words in the reading book supposedly are already in the child's vocabulary.

7. Children are encouraged to write frequently using the word patterns they read.

8. Pitch and stress are emphasized in some programs.

Several studies have been conducted in an attempt to evaluate the linguistic approach to teaching reading, but at present no significant contributions as to its real value are evident. The results of studies conducted using the Bloomfield-Barnhart materials proved nothing. In one instance, no comparative data were given and in another study there were no significant differences between the control and the experimental groups.

More recent studies evaluating the linguistic approach were completed by Sheldon and Lasinger (1966, 1967) and Schneyer (1966, 1967). These studies were among the twenty-seven studies sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education. Both were extended to the second and third grades. Sheldon and Lasinger compared three approaches to teaching reading using the Ginn Basal Reading Series, Structural Reading Series (a modified linguistic or phonic approach) and Let's Read (a linguistic approach). Results at the end of grades one and two showed the three treatments to be equally successful. Two of the treatments studied stress comprehension but the linguistic method avoided this area of instruction. The three groups showed equal achievement in comprehension at the end of grade two.

Schneyer (1966, 1967) conducted a similar study comparing the Scott, Foresman Basal Series with the Basic Reading Series Developed Upon Linguistic Principles. Results at the end of grades

one, two and three showed neither of the two approaches to be more effective.

(4) Programmed instruction means that a subject has been analyzed into component parts, arranged into the proper sequence and divided into the smallest possible segments for instruction. At each step the student is encouraged to think, to make a response, to correct it and to move to another small segment. This approach emphasizes conditioning, reinforcing, participating and self-pacing on the part of the student.

Programmed materials appear in the form of workbooks, books, cards and individual worksheets. Often these programmed materials consist of simple sentences and questions demanding a written response and requiring the student to work systematically through all the frames. This technique of sequencing the material is called linear programming. Another method utilized is branching which involves arranging the material in such a manner that more than one study route may be followed. The student proceeds in the sequence determined by his particular answers.

Several investigations have been conducted in an effort to determine the effectiveness of programmed materials. One study conducted by Ruddell (1966) used the Buchanan Programmed Reading series in six classrooms and the Sheldon Basic Readers in six classrooms. He found little difference between the achievements of the students taught by the programmed reading and those of the students taught by the basal readers. Two studies conducted later confirmed Ruddell's findings (Burkott 1968; Warner, 1968).

To summarize, there is some evidence that programmed instruction is an effective method when used properly in the classroom. Ellson (1962) found it to be particularly effective when employed with regular reading instruction. Programmed materials are not designed to replace the teacher, but should be used for achieving specific goals.

(5) The Initial Teaching Alphabet was devised in England by Sir James Pitman in the 1960's. For many, this alphabet was intriguing; however, the use of such alphabets can be traced back to the fifteenth century. Downing (1964) related the efforts of Sir Isaac Pitman and his brother, Benn, to the use of phonetic printing during the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Pitman devised the Initial Teaching Alphabet to be used to simplify the decoding process and to regularize the symbol-to-sound relationship which occur in beginning reading. It is to serve as a transitional learning alphabet and should be discarded when the learner has acquired the necessary skills to proficiently read traditional orthography (t.o.). The alphabet is commonly referred to as "i.t.a." which is derived from the initial letters of the words in the title.

Basically, i.t.a. consists of forty-four symbols which closely resemble the traditional orthography symbols so that the later transition to t.o. may be made with little difficulty. Twenty-four of the symbols are identical to the lower case traditional symbols. Since Q and X represent no sound of their own, they are discarded in i.t.a. There are fourteen symbols combining familiar conventional characters, plus a few special symbols to represent different

sounds of the same letter. Short vowel sounds are represented by the conventional vowel characters (a, e, i, o and u) while the long vowel sounds are represented by conventional vowel characters joined with an e.

At the present, research results on i.t.a. are inconclusive. The first major study of i.t.a. in the United States was conducted in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. Data accumulated at the end of the second grade revealed that the students taught with the Early-to-Read i.t.a. series performed significantly better in terms of vocabulary, spelling and creative writing; however, there was no difference in comprehension. Other studies concerning the American version of i.t.a. have been quite extensive. Four first-grade studies sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education compared the Early-to-Read Series with other approaches (Fry, 1966; Hayes, 1966; Tanyzer and Alpert, 1966; Mazurkiewicz, 1966; Hahn, 1966). The findings of these studies indicated that the i.t.a. and basal approaches were equally effective in comprehension as well as in reading accuracy and rate. Evidence concerning spelling ability was inconclusive; however, basal subjects were superior in three studies while i.t.a. excelled in one investigation. I.t.a. subjects were superior in word recognition abilities. Major findings of those studies which were extended into second and third grades revealed no significant differences between the methods (Fry, 1969; Hayes and Wuest, 1969). Studies by Chasnoff, 1968; Wiggins, 1967, indicated that no definite conclusions regarding the effectiveness of i.t.a. can be made until more extensive longitudinal studies

and follow-up studies are completed to evaluate the true effect of the utilization of i.t.a.

More recent studies have been concerned with the use of i.t.a. with disadvantaged children and disabled readers. Holmes and Rose (1969) found that disadvantaged children needed a significant amount of pre-reading development prior to effective learning in either i.t.a. or t.o. methodology. Tanyzer (1966) found that introducing a medium such as i.t.a. to kindergarten children in formal reading instruction does not result in significantly better reading and spelling achievement than that attained by children beginning formal reading instruction in the first grade with i.t.a. when both groups are measured in t.o. at the end of the first grade.

A major concern of the use of i.t.a. is the transition to t.o. Studies have shown that children taught by the i.t.a. method experienced a setback in reading skills at the transition stage from i.t.a. to t.o. (Downing, 1968).

(6) During the 1950's a new emphasis was placed on individualized reading to meet pupil differences and interests. This approach is child-centered and has moved away from the lockstep system characteristic of the traditional basal program. Teachers are free to undertake this approach in any school organizational plan because it is characterized by multiple methods from which the teacher chooses his own manner of teaching according to a child's specific needs. The actual practices vary tremendously from school to school and/or teacher to teacher. The success or failure of the approach depends almost entirely on the teacher since the teacher is free to develop his own program, utilize a wide variety of materials, diagnose pupils'

needs and teach skills by employing any method or methods. Thus, this freedom which permits teacher implementation and experimentation makes it very difficult to define individualized reading.

The philosophy underlying the approach is based on Olson's (1949) principles of child development: seeking, self-selection and self-pacing. The assumption is made that the normally active and curious child will seek reading experiences commensurate with his abilities and interests (Spache, 1969; Sartain, 1964; Veatch, 1959; Groff, 1962).

Self-selection of materials indicates that the child will select materials that he can read with little guidance from the teacher. As Spache (1969) aptly pointed out, some children have no need for reading and no sense of failure because of a lack of reading progress. He further noted:

> Not only do they not seek reading, but often they actively reject it, along with all the values and implications attached to it (p. 131).

Self-selection does not mean that the child has complete freedom of choice but does imply that each pupil has a different reading program. Teachers must continually help the reader find materials appropriate for his interests, purposes and abilities (Frazier, 1961). Darrow and Howes (1960) suggested that teachers should prepare a detailed plan for developing skills training. Teacher's manuals accompanying basal programs and textbooks on reading would be available sources to serve as guides.

It is apparent that teachers who adopt the individualized reading approach should have an exceptional knowledge of reading skills, possess the ability to teach these skills, be excellent diagnosticians, know how to establish independent work habits

and be familiar with many materials (Robinson, 1960; Groff, 1962; Spache, 1969; Lazar, 1960). Several studies have found that few teachers have adequate knowledge to teach the basic skills without assistance (Aaron, 1960; Gagon, 1960; Spache, 1965; Schubert, 1959; Emans, 1965; Henriksen, 1968).

Even though many classroom teachers and educators are extremely enthusiastic about the individualized approach, there are various obstacles or limitations inherent in the program (Spache, 1969; Groff, 1962; Robinson, 1960). The major problems include:

1. lack of materials
2. difficulty in conference scheduling
3. divergent views regarding content of conferences
4. inadequate diagnosis and evaluation of skills
5. lack of teacher knowledge of reading principles and skills
6. lack of proper methods classes
7. absence of children's emotional stability for this approach

In 1964, Groff summarized studies comparing the individualized and ability grouping approaches and found that a majority of the studies showed no significant difference between the two approaches; whereas, a small number of studies supported either ability grouping or individualized approach.

Several sources state that the experimental data currently available is not sufficient evidence to support the abandonment of basic programs in favor of the individualized approach as the total program (Clymer and Robinson, 1961; Witty, 1959; Sartain, 1960; Gray, 1958).

(7) The language experience approach is an attempt to unify the communication skills. Basically, there is no sharp distinction between the reading program and the listening, speaking, writing, and spelling programs. Through this approach to unify the development of the various skills, instruction continues to utilize the child's background of experiences together with other school curricula subject matter while progressing in reading.

The assumption is made in this approach that the child will realize that his oral language, based on his thoughts, experiences and subject matter learnings, can be written and read. Allen (1961) expressed this self-realization as:

> What I can think about, I can talk about.
>
> What I can say, I can write.
>
> What I can write, I can read.
>
> I can read what I write and what other people can write for me to read.

Within the framework of the program, a variety of language experiences are implemented in the classroom. These aspects of the approach require productive thinking, freedom of expression, individuality and personal satisfaction. Allen (1967, p. 173-4) described the experiences as ranging from the sharing of personal accounts to a critical reading in order to determine the validity and reliability of statements. The beginning experiences such as sharing a personal event require less maturity on the part of the student than do those at the end of the program. It is evident that these activities provide the major framework within which children learn to read.

The instruction within the language experience approach is not based on a series of materials but rather upon the language and the

thinking abilities of the children. From the first day of school, each child is encouraged to share ideas with his classmates through telling or illustrating something. The children learn to interact with others and learn to relate what others say to their own experiences. Eventually, through this communication cycle of listening, telling and discussing; the child is helped to summarize his ideas and to dictate them to the teacher.

When recording the stories, the teacher discusses the letters and their sounds, the words and their sounds, word recognition, style, etc. but does not alter the story other than preparing it in the correct experience-chart manner. After the teacher has completed the recording, the child "reads" his written story to his classmates.

With repeated opportunities for creating and recording stories with teacher assistance, children begin to increase their writing vocabularies. Soon each child desires to write his own stories and is encouraged to do so. Through the use of aids such as word lists, labels, picture dictionaries and other such devices, children begin to record their ideas independently. As each child records a story, it may be illustrated and placed in a folder, eventually to be bound into book form. Each child's books are shared with classmates, contributing to their growth in reading. Thus, through dictation to the teacher and through independent writing of stories by individuals, materials are developed for reading instruction. In addition to these "experience" stories or materials, many books and other reading materials are necessary for the child to have a balanced program in reading. Often through reading easy books, trade books and content area books children will discover these

materials as good resources for vocabulary, spelling and other purposes when recording their ideas.

The phonics and other word recognition skills are closely related to writing and spelling activities. No formal instruction is given. The teacher works with individuals or small groups as the need arises. This help is given in the child's own materials so that the instruction takes place in a natural setting and has immediate application. The phonics skills are developed from a "say it-see it" basis rather than the reverse which is frequently used in the other approaches.

A balanced program of reading materials is needed to insure success when using the language experience approach. The wide range of materials helps to encourage independent reading after the child has acquired an adequate sight vocabulary. Publishers have developed many supplementary materials that would be good to use in a program of this type. Some publishers are now preparing specific materials for the language experience approach.

Prior to the sixties, research evidence concerning the value of a language experience program was sparse. In a five-year study of the basal approach, the individualized approach and the language experience approach made as much or more progress than did children taught by the other methods. Vilscek (1968) cited other studies (Gardner, 1942; Wrightstone, 1944; Karsen, 1954) which reflected some superiority in the achievements of pupils who were taught in a language experience program. (Gates, Batcheller and Betzner, 1926; Lee, 1933).

Seven more recent studies involving the language experience method were among twenty-seven studies sponsored by the U. S.

Office of Education. Some of these were extended on a longitudinal basis through the third grade. Results of these studies (Hahn, 1966; Kendrick, 1966; Stauffer, 1966) at the end of the first grade indicated relatively few significant differences between the effectiveness of the approaches. Those pupils taught by the language experience method tended to perform better in word reading, comprehension and writing; however, no differences were found in spelling achievement.

During a third year follow-up study (Serwer, 1969), further evidence of the effectiveness of the language experience approach was established. During the first and second years of this study, the basal reader approach had a small but not a significant lead over the language experience method; however, during the third year language experience gains were greater than the basal reader gains. These increases were attributed to the early attention given to the children's vocabulary and concept development.

One of the studies (Stauffer and Hammond, 1969) which extended into third grade indicated that pupils taught by the language experience approach were superior in writing and eagerness to read; however, there was no significant difference in spelling, word reading, comprehension or attitude. Stauffer and Hammond concluded that an eclectic language experience or language arts approach to reading instruction throughout the primary grades would reap significant benefits that could not be obtained with the basal reader approach (p. 499).

WRITING-COMPOSITION. A persistent problem of the classroom teacher is that of helping children develop maturity and versatility with the English language in both its oral and written forms. The

methods of acquiring desired proficiency in written composition have been the subjects of a substantial amount of research.

With the increase today in the sale and use of typewriters, computers, duplicators and other technological devices which enhance written communication; there are many who believe that the teaching and learning of the skill of handwriting is not as important as it once was. There is no proof to support this contention. In actuality, there is a wealth of evidence to indicate that the opposite opinion is true. Both Freeman (1941) and more recently a study by Templin (1959, 1960) indicated that the typewriter and other devices have not reduced the need for handwriting.

Almost every person writes by hand his personal and social correspondence. The skill of writing legibly is still essential to the successful performance of students. Templin (1959) in a study of high school graduates and a sampling of adults found that professional people, more than non-professionals, used handwriting.

King (1961) and Noble (1963) in separate surveys found that handwriting programs are implemented mostly through the use of sixteen different commercial handwriting systems.

In a study made by the Committee for Research in Basic Skills at the University of Wisconsin (1960), the following conclusions were extracted and listed in the Encyclopedia of Education Research:

1. There is substantial agreement among the systems that legibility is the fundamental objective of handwriting instruction. In operational terms, handwriting that is easily read and easily written is legible.

2. Handwriting is generally regarded in a functional role as a tool for communication. Attempts are made, therefore, to correlate handwriting instruction with work in the skill and content fields. In some systems, handwriting performance is evaluated in application rather than within the handwriting period.

3. There is some agreement on procedures for developing the motor skills required for handwriting. For example, arm rather than finger movements are advocated as conducive to rhythmic movements and fluent writing.

4. Systematic procedures for learning the letter forms are proposed by some systems—e.g. seeing the letter or word, hearing it and tracing it in the air.

5. There is general agreement that practice is necessary and that it should be purposeful; but the purposes suggested range from pupil experiences (e.g. labeling and letter writing) to mastery of particular strokes (e.g. drawing circles and making vertical and horizontal strokes.)

6. Scales are introduced for use in comparing pupils' writing with standard forms, but greater emphasis is placed upon pupils' self-evaluation of their own writing.

7. There is no expectation of a uniform degree of skill in a classroom. The fact that pupils' abilities vary is recognized and lessons are planned accordingly.

8. The fundamental principles of good writing are the same for all grades, but at the upper elementary level there is a tendency to use the instructional time for remedial work. Pupils are helped to become more proficient in identifying general and specific inaccuracies in letter forms, slant, size, spacing and alignment.

Individualization should be a key factor in the development of handwriting programs. Individual students who learn to write legibly should be encouraged to use their own writing styles although they may not hold a pencil, place the paper or follow any particular approved handwriting system.

A number of studies have been made of words used in adult writing. Fitzgerald (1951), through a number of studies both of child and adult writing vocabularies, obtained a list of 2,650 of the most frequently used words. He also developed a basic list of

350 most commonly used words and a list of 450 words next most commonly used. He found that these 800 words made up 83.6 percent of the words usually used by children in their writing.

From the above and other research, it appears that some 2,000 words have been identified which have a high frequency in the writings of children and adults. There is also some evidence to indicate that if an individual learns to spell these words, he will be ninety-five percent accurate in spelling the words he uses in his writing. Words other than these common words which a person uses in his writing will vary with the individual, and the accuracy of the spelling of the additional words will often depend upon the person's use of the dictionary.

It is evident that even with all of the word frequency count studies, there is little agreement as to the words which should be included in spelling lists. There is also evidence to indicate that no formal lists of words can be identified which are inclusive of the words which students at various grade levels need to learn to spell so that they can be accurate in their writing. If 2,000 words comprise approximately 95 percent of the words used in the writing of children and adults, why not focus spelling instruction entirely on these words? Cursory consideration of this idea would lead one to believe that it is reasonable and feasible to do it. However, there is no research which indicates at what point the words (at what grade levels) become a part of and useful in students' writing Thus, many of these words would be taught before or after they were needed by students in their writing and they would soon be forgotten. In addition, the children's writing vocabulary would not be expanded since words which a student wanted to use in his writing would not be

taught if they were not included in the list. If the words which a student is prepared to use are not taught, individual differences are ignored. This conflict can be avoided if students are taught to spell the words that they misspell in their own writing.

In a survey of literature, only one author, Hildreth (1955), listed principles which should govern the teaching of spelling. However, Fitzgerald (1951), Horn (1967), Shane and Mulry (1963) and Furness (1964) have stated basic principles in many parts of their writings.

A summary of these principles follows:

1. Learning to spell is dependent upon the mental and linguistic growth of the learner. (Hildreth, 1955)

2. Spelling is best learned in the larger area of language usage of which it is a part. (Hildreth, 1955)

There is a known interrelationship among spelling, writing, oral language, reading and possibly listening. Generally a student's oral vocabulary is much more extensive than is his reading vocabulary; and often his reading vocabulary is greater than is his writing vocabulary. A pupil writes as he talks, proving that he has the courage to use words that he may not know how to spell. He may be slow in reading, writing and spelling because of a limited oral vocabulary. These are a few of many reasons why there is an interdependence among the various forms of language expression and why spelling should be taught within the larger area of language usage.

3. Students should perceive learning to spell as a purposeful activity.

A student will usually have no feeling of purpose when he is required to learn, week after week, a list of words from a spelling

textbook. This is true even though the teacher may drill on the pronunciation and meaning of each word. Purpose becomes evident to the pupil when he learns to spell words in his writing which he does not know how to spell and when he has meaningful writing assignments as a part of the content area class activities.

4. If words that are taught do not become a part of the student's writing vocabulary so that they are used continuously, he may learn to spell them at the time they are taught but he will soon forget how to spell them.

Often teachers say that students who learn to spell words misspell them when the same test is given several weeks or more later. This is a natural consequence when words are taught which are so foreign to the oral and written vocabulary of the student that they are not functional. A major criticism of spelling textbook lists is that they include too many of such words.

In many school systems, considerable time and attention are given to the teaching of traditional English grammar as an approach to the teaching of composition. Traditional grammar refers to a body of definitive rules regarding syntax and usage in the English language. According to Gleason (1964), "such a grammar does not describe what actually occurs in language, but it prescribes what should be said and written by proclaiming that a rule of grammar is competent, in and of itself, to determine what is correct and incorrect (p. 269)." Pooley (1957) sought to ascertain the strength of the belief in the efficacy of teaching formal grammar by surveying current textbooks and courses of study and by questioning experienced teachers of English from various parts of the country. He found that both the texts and the teachers emphasized grammatical

analysis and terminology in their teaching. In the following statement he described the teachers' beliefs regarding the importance of teaching formal grammar:

> Grammar is the means to improve speech and writing. Because it explains usage, grammar must be learned to support usage instruction. Grammar skills are best gained by learning the parts of speech, the elements of the sentence and the kinds of sentences. These skills are usually taught before the end of the ninth year. Drill and practice from textbooks and workbooks establishes grammar, which will then function in composition. (p. 51)

Questions regarding the practicality of such a grammar program have resulted in a number of research projects designed to determine the relationships between the study of traditional grammar and the acquisition of composition skills. DeBoer (1960) summarized numerous research studies on this problem dating from 1903 to 1957 and concluded from the findings that there is little relationship between a knowledge of the grammar program and an ability in English composition. He stated:

> .....a close examination of some of the reports of investigations of the effectiveness of grammar instruction might reveal flaws in research design or conclusions not fully warranted by the evidence. The impressive fact is, however, that in all these studies, carried out in places and at times far removed from each other, often by highly experienced and disinterested investigators, the results have been consistently negative so far as the value of grammar in improvement of language expression is concerned. Surely there is no justification in the available evidence for the great expenditure of time and effort still being devoted to formal grammar in American schools (p. 36).

Other summaries of research on the relationship of formal, traditional grammar study to composition have been made over a period of time by Smith (1938), Loban (1947), Strom (1960), Morine (1962), Shane and Mulry (1963), and Sherwin (1969) all of which have concluded that the traditional study of English grammar fails to increase fluency and precision in written composition.

Those dissatisfied with the formal approach have taught grammar usage from the point of view that the study of grammar should be functional. Grammar usage is learned best when studied as it is needed in actual speaking and writing. Pooley (1964) stated the underlying principles of this position as follows:

1. Most grammar is taught too early. It should be postponed until it is useful to the student.
2. A few concepts should be taught slowly and thoroughly.
3. Emphasis should be placed on those aspects of grammar which help a child improve his sentence structure.
4. Specific situations should be used for the teaching of grammar. (p. 212)

It is generally agreed that some stimulus is required for composition. There has been considerable interest in exploring the effects of a given stimulus on the nature of the composition elicited. Soffell (1929) attempted to determine if children's compositions based on self-chosen topics were superior in writing mechanics, organization and literary quality to assigned compositions. The composition topics were rotated so that the first, third and fifth were assigned while the second and fourth were "self-chosen." Two weeks elapsed between the writings and no assistance was given except for spelling. Using a scale for evaluating, it was found that the averages made on compositions concerning self-chosen subjects were better than those made on imposed subjects. Lower-grade children seemed to profit more from being allowed to choose subjects than did those in the upper grades. His findings were: (1) children wrote longer sentences and used more independent clauses in their highly personal writings, (2) when children wrote about themselves, they responded freely and usually achieved higher quality and interest,

(3) better writing was done on impersonal subjects when the writer told how he felt about it, (4) children responded best to situations which were highly personal.

McCleeland (1956) sought to learn if elementary children can be motivated to write creatively, if children can express themselves creatively in writing, if socioeconomic background influences creative writing and how elementary children use written form to express themselves. He found that children can be motivated to write creatively. The type of motivation should be dynamic, should be related to the child's experience and should stimulate freedom of expression. He noted that there is a need for teachers to work carefully with children from the lower economic class to more fully develop their skills of creative writing. He also stated that more attention should be devoted to all types of creative experiences in the early elementary grades. Betzner (1930) reported an extensive study which gave support to the value of dictating composition. She found a wide range of content and form in the original compositions dictated by children of ages five through eight. She noted that children readily responded to invitations to have their ideas written down and that artificial motivational devices were not needed. As the children dictated, heard and read more of their own ideas, their compositions became longer and more mature.

Howell (1955) sought to determine differences between compositions writtens and dictated by seven-year-olds about topics that grew from experiences and similar writings about topics that were assigned. Following each writing experience, each of the twenty-four children participating in the study dictated on the same topic about which

he had written. On the basis of the findings, the investigator concluded that seven-year-olds create longer compositions, use more extensive vocabularies and express more generalizations when they dictate their stories than when they do the writing themselves. Shared experiences were more conducive to generalizations than were assigned topics.

Dixon (1967) recommended preparing children to write by taking them out of the classroom to share experiences. The children should be encouraged to share, to discuss; and then, to draw, to paint, to work with materials or to write. Instead of helping the children to distinguish between utilitarian and imaginative uses of language, children should be led to recognize the value of writing as a tool of expression, in that (1) being permanent, it can help one collect a store of things worth remembering; (2) being slower than talking, it encourages one to reflect, to ponder and to make discoveries; (3) being private, it enhances one's opportunities to experiment with language.

There seems to be a general consensus that success in creative writing depends on conditions within the child himself and upon the classroom atmosphere. Kelley (1964) stated that first grade children are challenged to write when they are encouraged to tell their own ideas and to dictate their impressions. The child's progress in language will tell the teacher whether to continue to encourage dictating or rather independent writing. Children need to be provided with experiences for writing; they need to be given encouragement to find something they really want to write about and they need praise in their early attempts at writing. Weed and

Watson (1969) cited the following values of creative writing in the first grade: meaningful learning, enjoyable learning, increased understanding of children, low-budget program and enrichment of the total program.

Product Objectives

SEL/Project Language is based upon the research previously cited and is designed to alleviate the language deficiencies caused by disadvantage. The communication problems and lack of varied experiences which usually occur in children reared in economically and educationally deprived environments cause an absence of school readiness and accomplishment. The general objectives of the entire project, Levels I through VIII, are in reference to the areas of deficiency which are most frequently evidenced.

1. To increase the disadvantaged pupil's readiness for school related learning activities

2. To increase both the variety and the intensity of the educational experiences of the disadvantaged child by developing:

   a. his understanding of a variety of content areas beginning with those subjects which are most familiar to him and progressing to those which are more remote

   b. his understanding of existing natural and man-made phenomena

   c. his knowledge of many different concrete objects

   d. his ability to perceive and to mentally organize known objects and locations in his environment by differentiating them according to:

      1) textures
      2) tastes
      3) smells
      4) sounds
      5) colors

6) sizes
7) positions
8) directions
9) speeds
10) shapes
11) numbers

e. his understanding of the concrete applications of the learned materials

3. To stimulate each child's usage of speech patterns which reflect standard English by developing:

a. his skill in articulation and pronunciation

b. his ability to recognize the difference between standard and non-standard English

4. To augment the listening and speaking ability of the child by developing in him:

a. a lengthened attention span

b. the ability to comprehend what is heard

c. the capacity to follow directions

d. an interest in and an ability to read

e. an increased speaking vocabulary

f. frequent usage of his known vocabulary

g. the ability to use standard English when appropriate in both oral and written usage of:

(1) verbs
(2) nouns
(3) pronouns and their plurals
(4) prepositions
(5) possessives
(6) sentence forms

h. an interest in and a knowledge of content matter to be used as the basis for all language learning and practice

5. To improve each child's spelling

6. To improve beyond the usual expectations each child's classroom performance in reading

7. To improve each child's handwriting and composition abilities

8. To improve self concepts and establish free self-expression by developing in the child

   a. a better understanding of himself

   b. a more concrete self identity

   c. a feeling of self-worth gained through experiences of success

   d. an inquisitiveness and an ability to ask pertinent questions

   e. a point of view and the ability to express it coherently

   f. an acceptance and an emulation of various forms of creative behavior

   g. an imagination and the ability to express his imaginations in a variety of ways

   h. improved motor coordination

9. To improve each child's intellectual achievement in the following areas:

   a. study habits and skills

   b. usage of inquiring skills

   c. interest and concern for creativity

10. To initiate good social relationships by developing in the child:

   a. an understanding of the basic characteristics and relationships of all children

   b. an awareness of the rights and the privileges of other children.

These objectives must be recognized and at least partially achieved before disadvantaged students can obtain anything near the educational excellence of which they are capable.

SEL/Project Language as conceived by the Southeastern Education Laboratory will be designed for disadvantaged children from ages four to twelve years. Materials will be developed on each of eight levels beginning with those for nursery-school children

and ending with those for sixth-grade pupils. The major emphasis on all levels will be the teaching of language skills in combination with subject-matter learning—a language experience approach. Children will listen, talk, read and write when they are challenged and captivated by subject matter in which they are interested. This approach presents listening, speaking, reading and writing for a purpose, rather than for mere practice. It is hypothesized that the learning will increase in the Language Arts areas as well as in the subject matter fields when the total curriculum is correlated and made meaningful to the child himself and to his known world.

At the present time, SEL has published 32 SEL/Project Language lessons of Level II, Kindergarten. The lessons are designed for a total curriculum for six weeks of a kindergarten year. Skills in listening, speaking, reading readiness, number comprehension, art, music, creativity and physical activities are included as vital elements of the lessons, all of which focus on subject matter content. An emphasis is placed upon expanding the experiential horizons of disadvantaged pupils by exposing them to a variety of stimuli. The children are encouraged to speak freely and then to practice varying their speech forms to more nearly correspond to a standard English. The units studied commence with the child himself, his name, his body, his friends, his school, his home and his family. The studies then progress to the environment most familiar to each class of children, whether rural or urban. The lessons include a consideration of both environments so that the children learn first about their own world and then move to the less familiar one.

Because of the scarcity of materials at the kindergarten level, Level II will be expanded to at least 180 lessons so that it provides a total year's curriculum with a language emphasis. The units of study will continue to modes of transportation, children in foreign environments, Indian children of long ago, anatomy, world geography, geology, astronomy, physics, meteorology, botany, zoology, art, music and literature. At the beginning of each unit of study, skills will be listed in four specified areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing. A detailed subject matter outline will accompany the skill lists so that the teacher who desires freedom from the structured lesson format can design her own class presentations. At the end of each lesson plan, a supplement of additional activities, books and audio-visual aids will be included. A criterion-referenced test is available for use before and after the utilization of the curriculum to assess the progress made by the pupils.

Level I of SEL/Project Language, designed for nursery school, will follow a format similar to that which has been formulated for Level II. There will be fewer language skill expectations and the subject matter topics will be more simple. Again, the scarcity of structured programs at this level indicates the need for the development of specific lessons comprising a total year's curriculum. The outline of skill achievements and subject matter topics at the beginning of each unit will still free the creative teacher to develop her own lessons.

Level III, designed for first grade, will begin with a six-weeks' readiness program to review preschool experiences and to provide a summary of readiness activities for those children without preschool training. The 30 lessons developed will be a full-day's

curriculum for the six-weeks' period. The list of language skills and the subject matter units will be a slightly advanced review of Level II. The format will be the same as that used in Levels I and II, in that lists of skills and outlines of the units of study will precede the structured lessons. Additional activities as well as books and audio-visual materials will be cited following the lessons.

The remainder of Level III will be designed in a different fashion. A Teacher's Manual will be produced which will include a list of skill expectations for the entire year in each of four areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing-composition. The skills will be placed in the sequence in which the children are to learn them during the year. The skill sequences will be determined by teams of consultants in each of the language arts areas. The integrated approach of SEL/Project Language calls for a re-orientation of the teaching of reading combined with the teaching of subject matter and the other communication areas, identifying and practicing the general skills common to all the activities and the special skills which are involved in each specific activity.

A list of study units usually included in social studies, science and mathematics texts at the first grade level will be arranged in an order beginning with the child and moving outward to less familiar topics. A review of extant texts in each area will provide the study units sequence. The major portion of the Manual will be devoted to listing activities pertinent to the development of each language skill but utilizing the subject matter as a basis for the exercises. Model units will be developed and guidelines will be

given to assist the teacher in formulating lessons by integrating the lists of language skills with the ordering of subject matter content. Supplementary lists of additional activities, related books, readers, songs and art projects will be included.

Levels IV through VIII for grades two through six will be developed similarly. Thus, six teacher's manuals will be produced. Five general criteria of the project follow:

1. The program correlates knowledge of human growth and development with knowledge about the teaching of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Adequate experiences are provided along with the development of auditory and visual activities.

2. The program recognizes the growth in reading as being closely related to growth in listening, speaking and writing.

3. The program at any particular difficulty level is a part of the well planned program for the entire school which advances gradually in difficulty, yet remains harmonious to the interests and characteristics of the children.

4. The program provides for individual needs of the pupils with varied and flexible requirements.

5. The program provides basic instruction at each grade level including instruction in:

(1) basic skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing

(2) listening, speaking, reading and writing in the content areas

(3) recreational or independent studies

A successful development and implementation of SEL/Project Language will make a significant contribution to the improvement of education of disadvantaged children by providing more effective alternatives to current instructional practices.

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